



## *Alexandria Police Department*

### Directive 6.4



# VEHICLE USE AND MAINTENANCE

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### 6.4.01 PURPOSE/POLICY

The purpose of this directive is to inform all employees of the procedures for the use and maintenance of Departmental motor vehicles. It is the policy of this Department that all employees will operate its motor vehicles in compliance with all laws, directives, and administrative regulations.

### 6.4.02 USE OF VEHICLES

#### A. General

1. Employees operating Departmental vehicles must have a valid state and City operator's license in their possession.
2. Only clients, employees, residents, or guests of the City who are being transported in support of an official City function or purpose are permitted as passengers in Department vehicles, except as stated in section 6.4.04. Such transportation will be governed by safety regulations stated in Administrative Regulation 7-5. Citizens or victims of crimes may be transported in Department

vehicles when necessary to accomplish a police purpose, including but not limited to the following situations:

- a. To remove individuals from abusive or dangerous crime scenes;
  - b. To assist stranded motorists;
  - c. To bring persons to a medical facility in cases of domestic assaults not requiring emergency medical service;
  - d. To transport a woman to the Women's Shelter;
  - e. To transport a person to the magistrate's office for the purpose of obtaining a warrant; or
  - f. At the direction of a supervisor.
3. Employees traveling outside the Washington Metropolitan area with an early morning departure may, with the prior approval of the Chief of Police, or designee, take a vehicle home if their residence is en-route to the trip destination.
4. Employees operating City vehicles are responsible for securing the vehicle when unattended.
5. Employees will operate Department vehicles in such a manner as to avoid injury to persons or damage to property and not violate any state or city ordinances.
6. Before and after using any Department vehicle, employees will examine and report unrecorded damage or operational defects to their supervisor and complete any necessary reports. Failure to report damage or defects will create the presumption that no inspection was made.
7. At all times, when not on an emergency call, vehicles will be parked at a safe and legal parking location. Any exceptions must be articulable, and the employee must be able to show it was necessary to achieve an operational objective. Public perception should be considered to avoid the appearance of ignoring parking regulations. At emergency scenes, vehicles should be parked in as safe a manner as possible, considering the need to allow access for fire, medical, and other police vehicles.
8. All employees using Police Department vehicles to attend court or meetings at the Alexandria Courthouse or City Hall will refrain from using on-street parking spaces in the area. Employees will park their vehicles in one of the underground garages located at Market Square or the Alexandria Courthouse. No parking fees will be charged in these cases. Employees need only to sign the parking receipt indicating that they were on official business while parked in the garage.
9. Employees may use available on-street parking in the area of the Alexandria Courthouse or City Hall; while responding to calls for service, conducting foot patrols, providing other police services, when marked out to lunch, or when the

garages are closed or otherwise unavailable. Officers using their personally owned vehicles to attend court may also park in the garages without paying a fee. The parking receipt ticket must be signed and stamped by the Commonwealth's Attorney's office before being given to the lot attendant.

10. Employees will wear safety belts or other approved safety restraining devices when operating City vehicles. Employees will ensure that all front seat passengers use such restraining devices, as applicable. Exceptions are only warranted where exigent circumstances dictate a clear law enforcement need for a rapid unrestrained exit from a vehicle. Under no circumstances are child safety seats to be installed in the front passenger seat. **[41.3.3]**

**11. Use of tobacco products is prohibited in all Department vehicles, both marked and unmarked.**

12. Employees will pay full time and attention to driving and will not use cellular telephones or Mobile Data Browsers (MDB) in any manner that would endanger or distract them or cause an accident. Employees are encouraged to pull over or use with careful attention to their driving.
13. Employees will not operate a City vehicle if any alcoholic beverage has been consumed. Passengers who have consumed intoxicants of any kind are not permitted in the vehicle unless they are being transported for a police purpose.
14. Officers will carry proper Alexandria Police identification and an approved handgun anytime a Departmental vehicle is operated on or off duty.
15. When fueling City vehicles at the City fuel islands, the assigned vehicle Gasboy card will be used. The use of a Gasboy card assigned to another vehicle is prohibited. In the event a vehicle's Gasboy card is lost or malfunctioning, an open Gasboy card can be obtained by Fleet Management or a commander. In cases where the mileage needs to be reset, the City Shop should be contacted during regular business hours. During non-business hours, the Department of Emergency Communications (DEC) has the ability to reset the mileage.
16. When fueling City vehicles, employees will remain outside the vehicle at all times and will stand within reach of the fuel nozzle. Employees will return the fuel nozzle to the fuel pump once fueling is complete and prior to driving away.

**B. Patrol Vehicles**

1. Patrol vehicles are to be used only by sworn personnel working their normal tour of duty or an approved extra duty detail.
  - a. Priority levels for patrol vehicle use are as follows:

- Assigned officer;
  - On-duty personnel;
  - City-sponsored detail; or
  - Non-City-sponsored detail.
2. It is the responsibility of the officer taking a vehicle to ensure that the priority levels are followed. Employees will use their assigned vehicles when possible. If the assigned vehicle is not available, then a vehicle that is assigned to a group or officer not scheduled to work should be signed out. An employee should not take out a vehicle that will be needed by the assigned employee prior to the end of their tour of duty. When marking in service the officer will enter the number assigned to the vehicle they are driving on the MDB.
3. **Vehicle Status**
- a. Unauthorized use of a fleet key may result in disciplinary action. This does not preclude an officer from possessing a fleet key that may be used in extenuating situations such as moving a cruiser a few feet to remove a traffic hazard (blocking roadway or access by Fire/EMS, etc.)
  - b. It is the responsibility of each operator to personally note on the vehicle sign out computer any change in a vehicle's status. (For example, your assigned vehicle is 1752, but you drop it off at the Shop for repairs and take 1745, which was ready at the Shop; the computer must be changed to show the new status of both vehicles.) For Vehicles parked at headquarters the operator will list the location. The location will appear when the next operator signs out the vehicle. This will assist in locating the vehicle in a timely manner. Vehicles are not to be removed from the shop unless the operator knows that the vehicle is ready.
4. **Keys**
- a. Fleet keys are issued to patrol officers and any other police employee who has a need to operate a Department vehicle. Patrol officers with assigned vehicles are issued keys to their assigned vehicle. However, the key must be turned into Fleet Management staff or a commander when the employee is no longer assigned the vehicle. CID employees are issued keys and fobs to their assigned CID cars.
  - b. Lost keys will be reported immediately to a supervisor, who will forward an informal memo to Fleet Management, requesting a replacement for the key.
  - c. **Except for Patrol supervisors and Fleet Management employees, employees are not authorized to possess keys to a Department vehicle when not assigned to operate that vehicle.**

This section is not intended to prohibit units other than Patrol from maintaining a spare keyboard and utilizing proper control measures for non-fleet keyed vehicles.

Key-fobs to vehicles assigned to the Criminal Investigations *Division (CID)* vehicles will be assigned to the primary operators and treated as any other issued piece of equipment. If the key or fob is lost, a report must be made, and a financial responsibility form completed by a supervisor. Issued police vehicle fleet keys will not be left at the shop with the vehicle for maintenance or repairs.

### **C. Vice/Narcotics Task Force**

Due to the nature of the specialized tasks performed by employees assigned to Vice/Narcotics, some sections of this directive are not applicable. Affected employees should seek guidance in the Vice/Narcotics Section Standard Operating Procedures or the Vice/Narcotics commander.

### **D. Other Department Vehicles**

There may be occasions when employees must use vehicle assigned to units other than Patrol. Use of any vehicle outside Patrol requires supervisory approval. *The Criminal Investigation Division (CID)* maintains their own log and all requests for vehicles require the authorization from a CID supervisor.

## **6.4.03 INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE**

### **A. Inspection of Patrol Vehicles**

1. At the start of each day's shift, the officer will inspect his or her vehicle for:
  - a. Damage and cleanliness;
  - b. Radio in proper working order;
  - c. All emergency equipment;
  - d. All lights;
  - e. Wiper blades;
  - f. Fluid levels (oil and transmission, power steering fluid, brake fluid and windshield washer fluid);
  - g. Gasboy Card (ensure the number matches the vehicle number);
  - h. Tires (safe for use and not exhibiting any unusual wear pattern);
  - i. Hub caps; and
  - j. Gate passes.

Check the Trunk for the following:

- Spare tire;
- Jack & lug wrench;
- Fire extinguisher;
- Safety flares (12); and
- Traffic cones (3).

All equipment in the vehicle will be maintained in good working condition.

It is the operator's responsibility to correct or arrange for correction of deficiencies. The replenishment of certain fluids (transmission fluid, brake fluid and antifreeze) can only be done at the City Shop. Flares, washer fluid, and fire extinguishers are available on the east side of the first level in the parking garage. This area is checked by Fleet Management twice per week for proper stock. Safety related problems discovered during inspection need to be brought to the attention of a supervisor. His or her direction will be followed, i.e., have vehicle towed to shop or driven to shop for repairs. Vehicles with mechanical or equipment problems are to be taken to the City Shop promptly.

2. It is the operator's responsibility to check the body of the vehicle for damage again, at the end of the tour of duty.
3. No trash will be left in the vehicle at the end of the tour of duty. The operator is responsible for the cleanliness of the vehicle.
4. All unrecorded damage will be reported on an Offense/Incident Report (APD-7) and brought to the attention of a supervisor, who will make an appropriate entry in the vehicle damage file and initiate an investigation to determine responsibility, if appropriate. Damages incurred as the result of an accident or other means will be entered on the file card by the supervisor who approves the report. "The Marked Cruiser Damage Log" file for vehicles assigned to the patrol shifts will be located in the report writing room on the lower level, Room L80. A copy of the report and all supplements will be forwarded to the Fleet Management Sergeant.
5. Patrol Sergeants will inspect all vehicles assigned to their work group once a month (A-side and B-side). This will fulfill the requirement that each vehicle be inspected twice each month. A Vehicle Inspection Report (APD-255) will be completed by the supervisor for each vehicle inspected. The completed APD-255 will be forwarded to the Fleet Management sergeant.
  - a. Patrol supervisors should attempt to conduct the vehicle inspections after the start of their shift. This will provide all officers the opportunity to comply with Section 6.4.03, A.1 above.

- b. Patrol Sergeants will be held accountable for the condition of the vehicles assigned to their personnel.
6. Patrol supervisors with officers that do not share a vehicle (i.e. Take-home vehicles) will be required to inspect that vehicle twice each month.
7. Patrol Lieutenants will inspect all vehicles assigned to their shift quarterly. The results of the inspection will be forwarded through the chain of command to the *Field Operations Bureau (FOB) Commander* and then to the *Support Services Division Commander*.
8. Fleet Management will conduct routine inspections of the Patrol fleet, using the APD-255, and will maintain a file of all APD-255's sent to their office. All forms older than 24 months may be discarded.

#### **B. Inspection of Other Department Vehicles**

1. It is the responsibility of each employee to inspect the vehicle for damage prior to use, and again at the end of their tour of duty, or use of the vehicle, each day. All damage found will be reported.
2. Commanding officers of units to which vehicles are assigned are responsible for the assignment of a supervisor to make twice monthly inspections of their vehicles.
3. Completed inspections of all Department vehicles, including motorcycles, will be documented using the Vehicle Inspection Report (APD-255).
4. Criminal Investigations and other specialized units will maintain their own vehicle damage file.

#### **C. Maintenance and Repair**

**No alterations are to be made to a City Police Department vehicle unless approved by the *Support Services Division Commander* or Sergeant in Fleet Management Unit.**

When a vehicle requires maintenance, it will be taken to the Vehicle Maintenance Facility at 3550 Wheeler Avenue. Any time a vehicle is left at the City Shop for service a completed work order will be left there. Work orders are located at the City Shop and the report writing room at Headquarters.

When an employee's vehicle is listed on the monthly Preventive Maintenance (PM) list, it is their responsibility to make an appointment with the City Shop for the

appropriate service. It is also the employee's responsibility to ensure the vehicle is transported to the City Shop at the scheduled time of the appointment.

## 1. Dropping Off/Picking Up Vehicles at the City Shop

### a. When Open:

**Preventive Maintenance or Time Consuming Repairs:** Vehicles that are being left at the City Shop for preventive maintenance or time-consuming repairs will be parked on the north side of the facility facing the concrete wall and cyclone fence, if possible. The operator will report to the service office located at the center of the facility, fill out a "Vehicle Work Order," and submit it to the service advisor. Vehicle keys will only be given to the service advisor if the vehicle is not fleet keyed. Operators can check the status of their vehicle by contacting the Fleet Management sergeant or the service advisor at the City Shop.

**Quick Repairs:** When a vehicle requires a quick repair (for example, a headlight), the operator will go to the service advisor and explain the problem. The service advisor will advise whether the problem can be repaired while the operator waits. If so, the operator will complete the "Vehicle Work Order" and give it to the service advisor.

**Picking Up Vehicles:** Prior to taking any vehicle from the City Shop, the service advisor will be notified. No vehicle will be removed from the City Shop until the vehicle repairs have been completed or the removal is authorized by the service advisor.

### b. When Closed:

Officers may drop vehicles off at the City Shop after hours when needed by parking the vehicle on the north side of the building if possible. A work order can be obtained at the white ticket box by the building entrance and placed back inside the box when completed. AT NO TIME ARE CRUISER KEYS OR KEY FOBS PERMITTED TO BE LEFT IN THE BOX OR VEHICLE AT THE CITY SHOP. If the vehicle needing service is not fleet keyed, the key must be left in the Fleet Management mail box on the first floor of Headquarters.

## 2. Radios

- a. When an employee experiences a problem with the radio in the vehicle, the vehicle will be taken to the Radio Shop at 4064 South Four Mile Run Drive, Arlington, Virginia. The employee will bring the problem to the attention of the shop supervisor. Repairs of this type can usually be made while the employee waits. Fleet Management should also be notified.

- b. Officers working during non-business hours may leave the vehicle at Headquarters and notify Fleet Management by email of the specific radio issue. Fleet Management will arrange to transport the vehicle to the Radio Shop for repair.
3. Tactical computers, weapons, and all other Police and personal property will be removed from all vehicles left at any facility for repairs.

#### **D. Calibrations**

1. *Virginia State Code §46.2-882 requires that the speedometer of vehicles used for traffic enforcement be calibrated every six (6) months. Calibration due dates are listed on the monthly Preventive Maintenance (PM) list. It is the responsibility of the assigned officer/s to ensure the calibration is completed before the due date. If a calibration is not completed by the due date, the officer will not utilize the vehicle to measure speed by pacing nor will it be used to perform moving radar. The assigned officer/s will also notify the Fleet Management Unit, through their chain of command, in writing the reason the calibration was not completed by the due date and the date the calibration was ultimately completed.*
2. *The Fleet Management Unit will review each certified calibration report completed by the Department of General Services' Fleet Services staff to ensure calibrations do not exceed the 2-MPH standard. If a calibration exceeds the 2-MPH standard, the officer will be notified by the Fleet Management Unit and the vehicle will not be used to measure speed by pacing nor will it be used to perform moving radar until the vehicle is retested and determined to be within the 2-MPH standard.*
3. *Officers will maintain a copy of the most recent certified calibration report in their vehicles.*

### **6.4.04 TAKE HOME VEHICLES**

#### **A. Requests and Approval of Take-Home Vehicles**

1. All employees will initially complete and submit a Take-Home Vehicle Request Form through their chain of command to the Chief of Police. All Department take-home vehicles must be approved by the Chief of Police and the City Manager or designee. Any take home requests for employees residing more than 45 driving miles outside the City require separate approvals from the City Manager. Distance requirements should be strictly adhered to and exemptions requested only if there is a specific operational need.
2. All approved forms must be submitted to the *Support Services Division*

*Commander*, who maintains the Department's official records on the Take-Home Program. When a take-home vehicle is rescinded for any reason, the *Support Services Division Commander* will be notified. The City Manager or designee will periodically review and approve the Department's take-home vehicle forms and the overall program, in accordance with AR 7-3, Use of City Vehicles.

3. Any time an employee changes address or assignment, he or she must submit a new Take-Home Vehicle Request Form within 30 days of such change. If an employee resides at more than one location, each address and the miles driven to each address must be reported on the form. If an employee moves beyond 45 miles outside the City the employee will relinquish their take home vehicle, unless the employee has an approved exemption or other arrangements so as to not violate the 45-mile limit.
4. Each November 1st, all employees with take-home vehicles must submit a new Take-Home Request Form as they will need to be submitted annually to the Director of Finance. The driver of any take-home vehicle whose form is not received by the Director of Finance by the due date will not be permitted to drive the vehicle until the Director of Finance has determined compliance.
5. *Field* Operations Bureau will conduct a yearly review.
  - a. The *Field* Operations Bureau commander will ensure that all In-City marked take-home vehicles undergo a review during the yearly submission of the Take Home Vehicle Request Form.
  - b. The review will validate the current deployment of marked take home vehicles and recommend adjustments to meet the needs of the Department/community based on the criteria outlined in the section 6.4.04.B.

#### **B. Assignment of Take-Home Vehicles**

Take home vehicles are not an employee benefit. The program is designed to accomplish Departmental objectives and is subject to modification or withdrawal at any time.

1. The following is the list of take-home vehicles prioritized by position, based on operational need (In-City or Out –of-City):
  - a. Special Operations Team
  - b. K-9 Unit
  - c. Criminal Investigations (Crimes Against Persons Section)
  - d. Intelligence and Homeland Security unit (JTTF)
  - e. Academy Assignment
  - f. *Office of External Affairs and Professional Responsibility*
  - g. Public Information Office

2. The following is the list of take-home vehicles prioritized for In-City only:

- a. Residential Police officer
- b. Patrol
- c. Community Oriented Policing Section
- d. Sworn staff assigned to all other sections/units.

3. Cross-bureau consideration of all marked take home vehicles.

Decisions on assignment and deployment of vehicles need to be coordinated amongst the bureaus when officers outside of patrol are seeking a take home vehicle assignment, changing locations or assignments.

4. Multiple cars at one residence.

- a. Only one marked vehicle will be assigned at a residence.
- b. Positional assignments will be considered on a case-by-case basis (e.g. a SOT member and lieutenant at one residence) with consideration given to unmarked/marked types of vehicle combinations.
- c. Consideration should be given to public perception; however, operational need will be the primary evaluation criteria.

**C. All Take-Home Vehicles-While on Leave**

Officers with take-home vehicles, who are on sick, annual, or compensatory leave for more than seven (7) calendar days, will leave their vehicle in the care of their supervisor. The Fleet Management Sergeant or immediate supervisor may assign the car as needed. This applies to all take-home vehicles, except Special Operations Team (SOT) designated vehicles. SOT designated vehicles will be left with the SOT Commander or designee.

**D. Shotguns or Other Approved Departmental Weapons-Take Home Vehicles**

Officers with Take-Home cruisers must leave their assigned shotgun or rifle in the arsenal at the end of their shift. SOT members are authorized to store weapons in their vehicles, in compliance with requirements of Police Directive (PD) 7.1, Firearms, section 7.1.08.E.

**E. Off-Duty Enforcement-All Take-Home Vehicles**

- 1. **Traffic:** When using an assigned vehicle off duty within the City limits, an officer is not expected to be a strict traffic law enforcer. The officer cannot, however

exhibit indifference to flagrant traffic law violations and will take enforcement action, as he/she deems necessary, when witnessing violations.

2. **Criminal:** When by the nature of radio dispatch for police assistance, or by the proximity of an incident, it becomes obvious that an officer's immediate response may result in the prevention of a crime or the apprehension of a criminal, the officer will notify the dispatcher of his/her location and receive clearance to respond to assist with any police action.
3. **Take-Home Vehicle Callback Response Information:** When called back to work during off-duty hours, Police staff with assigned take-home vehicles (both in-City and out of City) will capture required information regarding the response. This information must be entered into the Take-Home Vehicle Callback Form prior to the end of the call out. The form is available on the MDB roll call screen under "Take-Home Vehicles Callback." It is also available on City desk top computers. This form replaces the Off-Duty Activity Report.

#### **F. Take-Home Vehicles for Officers Living Outside the City**

Marked and unmarked take-home vehicles traveling outside the City are for the transportation of employee(s) and their police related equipment to and from the City or designated work site. At the discretion of the officer, family members and friends of the officer may be permitted to accompany him or her when operating the assigned vehicle to and from the City with a completed Ride-Along Release, (APD-0159), which will be routed through the officer's chain of command to be filed with the Patrol commander's secretary. Officers and passengers will dress in attire that is acceptable to meet and/or be seen by the public. Take home vehicles, traveling outside the City, are not to be used for personal use or errands. However, brief convenience stops may be made as part of the officer's commute as long as they are along the most direct route to or from the work location.

#### **G. Take-Home Vehicles for Officers Living in the City**

1. Only sworn officers will drive marked *or unmarked* take-home cruisers. At the discretion of the officer, family members and friends of the officer will be permitted to accompany him/her when operating the assigned vehicle while off duty. Officers and passengers will dress in attire that is acceptable to meet and/or be seen by the public. The passenger must have a signed Ride-Along Release (APD-0159) on file.
2. Off duty operation of assigned vehicles will be restricted to the corporate limits of the City of Alexandria. The use of assigned vehicles outside Alexandria will not be allowed except in an emergency, police related circumstance, for prior approved meetings, or training such as Mandatory In-Service Retraining (MIR). Vehicles will be used for travel to and from work and may be used for off-duty details and other personal matters.

**H. Use of Radio for Officers Living in the City**

1. Whenever operating the assigned vehicle off duty, officers will mark in and out of service using either their personally assigned unit number or serial number via radio or MDB.
2. While operating the assigned vehicle, both on and off-duty officers will have their radio turned on and will remain alert to all radio transmissions. When making off-duty radio transmissions, officers will use their personally assigned unit number or serial number.

**I. Liability Considerations**

1. Off duty emergency operation of assigned vehicles must be in compliance with all applicable laws and will be governed by Police Directive 10.11A, Emergency Vehicle Operations.
2. Because of the danger involved in the emergency operation of a police vehicle, non-sworn passengers will be discharged, as soon as possible and practical, before operating the vehicle Priority Response.
3. Proper performance and appearance of a vehicle and equipment will be the responsibility of the officer to whom it is assigned.
4. Vehicles will be locked at all times when not in use.
5. Take-home vehicles will not be utilized while on light-duty except in rare circumstances with prior approval from the Chief of Police or his designee.
6. Ride-Along Release (APD-0159) must be on file when applicable.

**J. Use of 95 and 495 Express (HOT Lanes)**

1. There is no legal exemption for law enforcement using the Express Lanes while commuting to and from work or for administrative reasons. Law enforcement may use Express Lanes while in the performance of law enforcement duties for a "specific operation or response", which involves activity that is an operational necessity. Employees will not use the Express Lanes without being able to articulate a specific operational need or response. Travel to and from meetings, the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Training Academy (NVCJTA) or the forensic lab would not qualify as a specific operation or response.
2. Employees that use the Express Lanes in the performance of law enforcement duties will be required to report their travel to Transurban, Inc. by the end of their scheduled tour of duty through the following email link:

[customercare@expresslanes.com](mailto:customercare@expresslanes.com). Employees will use the following information to complete the email:

- a. The Subject line will state: Alexandria Police-Express Lanes Official Use.
  - b. The following information will be placed in the narrative:
    - i. Name of the employee;
    - ii. Date/Time the Express Lanes were accessed;
    - iii. Vehicle make/model and license number;
    - iv. Vehicle number;
    - v. Case number for the specific operation or response; and
    - vi. Write the statement, "While in the performance of my law enforcement duties I accessed the Express Lanes and request that charges not be assessed for this trip."
  - c. A duplicate of the email will be sent to the employee's immediate supervisor, section/division commander, and the Fleet supervisor.
3. Employees who want to access the Express Lanes while commuting must have their own E-ZPass Flex transponder and assume all financial responsibility for its use.
  4. Employees who acquire an E-ZPass or E-ZPass Flex for their assigned City vehicle, and use these devices during scheduled work hours, will assume all financial responsibility for its use. Financial reimbursement is not authorized for employees using their personal E-ZPass or E-ZPass Flex while using a City owned or leased vehicle.
  5. An E-ZPass Flex transponder allows the driver to switch to a high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) mode to avoid tolls, only when they have three or more people in their vehicle. Employees utilizing an E-ZPass Flex transponder in a City vehicle will only switch to the HOV mode when they have three or more approved occupants in the vehicle, regardless of the purpose of the travel.
  6. Any employee who receives a citation for violating these rules/policies will be personally responsible for all tolls, fees and fines associated with the violation.

**K. Carpools**

Employees with take home vehicles will not carpool as a matter of convenience for their commute.

**BY AUTHORITY OF:**

**Michael L. Brown  
Chief of Police**